

Coins

Copper costs climb, steel-penny possibilities rise

By Roger Boye

COPPER PRICES have been going up in recent weeks, and so has the amount of speculation about possible dramatic changes in the Lincoln penny.

In fact, the Treasury Department soon may propose legislation to change the coin's metal composition, reported David L. Ganz, legislative counsel for the American Numismatic Association. One likely candidate is a cent made with steel and coated with a material to make it look like current cents produced with 95 per cent copper and 5 per cent zinc.

Changes may be necessary because the Bureau of the Mint cannot manufacture a copper penny for less than 1 cent if it is forced to

pay more than \$1.15 a troy pound for copper. Recently, copper has sold for as much as \$1.30 a troy pound and more.

If copper prices go to about \$1.50 a troy pound, metal smelters could make a profit by melting Lincoln cents and selling the refined copper. Of course, the Treasury secretary has the authority to forbid the melting of coins to protect the nation's money system.

Meanwhile, the Canadian government has announced that it will produce an unusually thin penny to conserve copper and reduce coin production costs.

For many years, Canada's cent has been almost the same size as the Lincoln penny and has circulated freely in this country. But later this year, the Canadian government will reduce

the thickness of its cent by nearly 20 per cent.

WHILE HIDING from the Nazis during World War II, Anne Frank pasted a picture of herself in her diary and wrote: "This is a photo as I would wish myself to look all the time. Then I maybe would have a chance to come to Hollywood."

The snapshot was taken in the early 1940s, when Anne was about 12 years old. She died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945, just three months before her 16th birthday.

Her diary survived the war, of course, and eventually became one of the best-selling books of all time. It told the saga of the Frank family and four other Jews as they tried to escape terror by living in the attic of an Amsterdam building.

Last year, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Anne's birth, the Judaic Heritage Society issued a medal that depicts Anne as she appeared in the photo. Otto Frank, Anne's 90-year-old father and the only family member to survive the war, has described the medal's portrait as "an excellent work which does justice to Anne."

During the last three months, the society has been selling the medals to collectors, and a spokesman reported last week that many medals are still available, although orders have been "coming in fast." A 1 1/2-inch bronze medal costs \$14, and silver and gold specimens are also being sold.

To order, or for more information, write the society at P.O. Box 2022, New York, N.Y. 10017.